



Legislative Briefing

Texaco-Chevron Merger Approved

Earlier this month Utah and 11 other states joined the FTC in approving the merger of Chevron and Texaco, thus creating the nation's second largest oil company. Under the conditions of the approval, Texaco must sell its interest in a joint venture with Shell Oil, as well as its general aviation business in Utah and other states.

Without the divestiture, the newly formed Chevron Texaco Corporation would threaten to stifle competition in the marketplace and lead to higher consumer prices for gasoline. Assistant Attorney General Ronald Ockey was actively involved in negotiations to ensure Utah consumers were protected.

Independent gasoline wholesalers and retailers, will be allowed to continue using the Texaco brand for a period of time so they can switch brands.

No Break-up for Microsoft

The US Department of Justice recently announced that it would no longer seek a break-up of Microsoft and is instead considering a remedy to the anti-trust violations in order to preserve competition and provide consumers with more options.

Utah and the 18 other states that had joined in the anti-trust lawsuit were consulted on the matter and agreed it was the right decision. Assistant Attorney General Wayne Klein is representing Utah's interest in the lawsuit.

The Department of Justice expects to ask the new judge to review the case and impose a penalty to ensure the company does not operate as an illegal monopoly in the future.

Internet Safety Tour Going Strong

As Attorney General Shurtleff continues his tour around the state to talk about Internet safety, many parents and students are admitting they didn't know how easily online predators could contact children.

Investigators demonstrate how predators often manipulate children into releasing personal information and even meeting them. Under a new law sponsored by **Rep. Duane Bourdeaux**, Utah can now prosecute individuals who use the Internet to entice a child to engage in sexual activity. Attorney General Shurtleff is stressing the importance of prevention and providing tips to students and parents for safe surfing. For more info on remaining tour dates, call (801) 579-4521.

Cedar City	9/13	Tooele	10/8
SUU Sharwan Smith Center	7 p.m.	Tooele County Bldg.	7 p.m.
St. George	9/17	Salt Lake	10/15
Dixie College	7 p.m.	Riverton High	7 p.m.
Dunford Auditorium			
Vernal	9/25	Salt Lake	10/29
Vernal Middle School	7 p.m.	Skyline High	7 p.m.
Price	9/26	Salt Lake	10/30
Civic Auditorium	7 p.m.	Granger High	7 p.m.
Moab	9/27	Richfield	11/1
Moab Valley Inn	7 p.m.	Snow College South Conference Center	7 p.m.
Provo	10/2	Salt Lake	11/8
BYU Wilkinson Center	7 p.m.	Jordan High	7 p.m.

Court Urged to Uphold Death Sentence

The Attorney General's Office has asked the Utah Supreme Court to uphold the death sentence for convicted murderer Taberon Dave Honie. Honie's attorney argued that a racially motivated comment made by the prosecutor improperly weighed in the sentencing decision. He also claimed the death penalty was inappropriate because the trial court improperly considered Honie's criminal record and because he was only 22 at the time of the murder.

Assistant Attorney General Kris Leonard countered that the aggravating facts of Honie's crime far outweighed any mitigating circumstances. The judge, not the jury, imposed the sentence. Honie was sentenced in 1999 for murdering and sexually assaulting his ex-girlfriend's mother at her Cedar City home.

Two More Children's Justice Centers Funded

Two more Children's Justice Centers now have operational funds, thanks to the Utah Legislature. Continuing funding for the Emery Center in Castledale and the Wasatch/Summit Center in Heber City was requested in a bill sponsored by **Rep. Scott Daniels** and became effective July 1.

Meanwhile, the Tooele CJC has outgrown its current building and with the help of the community, is moving to a much larger home. The Ogden CJC is also moving into a larger facility.

AG Encourages Law Students to Serve the Public

Attorney General Shurtleff told University of Utah Law School students that attorneys have the greatest duty to help people, regardless of their ability to pay. His remarks kicked off the school's annual Pro Bono Initiative, which arranges for students to volunteer with law firms and agencies to provide legal support for public advocacy organizations and causes.

Stressing the importance and rewards of public service, Shurtleff cited Joan of Arc: "to live without a cause is worse than dying." Last year, more than 4,000 hours were volunteered by students.

High Court Orders Trial on All-Terrain Meth Case

The Utah Supreme Court has stepped into a case involving two people accused of transporting methamphetamine while traveling on stolen ATVs. The Utah Attorney General's Office asked the justices to intervene after a district judge refused to order the defendants to stand trial on the drug charges.

The High Court ordered the judge to bind Karl Hoppe and Amanda Kelson over on the first degree felony charges.

Bridal Shop Owner Pleads Guilty to Fraud

Bridal shop owner Michelle Gardiner Croft pleaded guilty to three counts of communication fraud earlier this week for selling used wedding dresses as new bridal gowns. Assistant Attorney General Richard Hamp filed the charges against Croft in July following an investigation by the Utah Division of Consumer Protection. She will be sentenced next week.

Medicaid Fraud Unit Gets Thief for Stealing Nest Egg

Christopher John Nowell was recently ordered to serve the maximum sentence of 15 years and pay \$60,000 in restitution for stealing tens of thousands of dollars from his ailing grandparents. The Tooele man pleaded guilty to exploitation of an elder adult after the Attorney General's Medicaid Fraud Unit discovered he had pocketed money from his grandparents' account instead of paying for their nursing home costs.

The Attorney General's Office represents the State in thousands of cases each year. If you need information on any matter being handled by our office, please call Ryan Mecham at 538-1948 or Attorney General Mark Shurtleff at 538-1191. Thank you.

Club Drug Summit Participants Say Education is Key

Utah must focus on education and prevention, according to the 200 community leaders, law enforcement officers, and educators who participated in the Utah Club Drug Summit last month. After learning how widespread club drug use is among Utah's youth, participants compiled recommendations in the areas of law enforcement, education, treatment, and sexual assault.

Almost all club drugs are controlled substances, including GHB, which became a controlled substance in Utah last year under a bill sponsored by **Rep. Ron Bigelow**. Yet many youth do not view them as "real drugs" and are not aware of the risks and sometimes fatal consequences.

Many participants of the summit acknowledged they knew very little about the drugs and believe an important step will be to train peers. Treatment professionals recommended gathering statistics to assess the scope and depth of Utah's club drug problem. Law enforcement representatives suggested raising standards for rave permits and promoters' licenses. Finally, participants agreed that resources needed to be available to youth and parents not only to treat the physiological effects of club drug abuse, but to provide a support network for families coping with this problem.

The Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice is preparing a detailed report of these and other recommendations, which will be available soon.